

April Ambiguity

September 8, 2012

In mid-April there was submitted to Rome on behalf of the Society of St Pius X a confidential document, doctrinal in nature, of which it was said that it laid out Catholic principles that all the SSPX authorities could subscribe to. In mid-June Rome rejected the document as basis for a Rome-SSPX agreement. Thank goodness, because it contained a supremely dangerous ambiguity: in brief, does an expression like “The Magisterium of all time” mean up until 1962, or up until 2012? It is all the difference between the religion of God, and the religion of God as changed by modern man, i.e. the religion of man. Here are some of the principles, as summarized for SSPX authorities:—

“1/ . . . Tradition must be the criterion and guide for understanding the teachings of Vatican II. 2/ So the statements of Vatican II and of the post-conciliar papal teaching with regard to ecumenism and interreligious dialogue or religious liberty can only be understood in the light of Tradition **complete and uninterrupted**, 3/ in a manner that does not clash with the truths previously taught by the Church’s Magisterium, 4/ without accepting any interpretation opposed to, or breaking with, Tradition and that Magisterium”

The 1962 or 2012 ambiguity lurks here in the words “Tradition” and “Magisterium.” Are these two words being taken to exclude doctrines of the Council (1962–1965) and its aftermath, or are they including them? Any follower of Tradition will read the passage so as to exclude them, because he knows that there is a huge difference between the Church and the Newchurch. But any believer in Vatican II can so read the passage as to be able to pretend that there is a seamless continuity between the Church before and after the Council. Let us take a closer look at how the Traditionalist and the Conciliarist can each read the passage in his own way.

Firstly, the Traditional reading:– “1/ Pre-conciliar Tradition has got to be the measure and judge of Council teachings (and not the other way round). 2/ So Conciliar and post-conciliar teaching must all be sifted according to the whole of Traditional teaching prior to the Council, 3/ so as not to clash with anything that the Magisterium taught prior to the Council, 4/ accepting no interpretation or text that breaks with the pre-conciliar Tradition or Magisterium.”

Secondly, the Conciliar reading (certainly that of the Romans in charge of today’s Church):– “1/ Tradition from before and after the Council (because there is no difference) must be judge of the Council. 2/ So Conciliar teaching on controversial subjects must be sifted according to the Church’s one complete pre- and post-conciliar Tradition (because that alone is the “completeness” of Tradition), 3/ so as not to clash with the Church’s pre- or post-conciliar Magisterium (because they teach the same), 4/ accepting no interpretation that breaks with pre- or post-conciliar Tradition or Magisterium (because there is no break between all four of them).”

This Conciliar reading means that the Council will be judged by the Council, which means of course that it will be acquitted. On the contrary by the Traditional reading the Council is utterly condemned. Ambiguity is deadly for the Faith. Somebody here is meaning to play games with our Catholic minds. Let whoever it is be anathema!

Kyrie eleison.